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GUARANI SM4
Mbaya SK11

A 302 [142 826] All the Abipones have thick, raven-black locks; a child born with red or flaxen hair would be looked upon as a monster amongst them. The manner of dressing the hair differs in different nations, times, and conditions. The Abipones, previously to their entering colonies, shaved their hair like monks, leaving nothing but a circle of hair round the head. But the women of the Mbaya nation, after shaving the rest of their heads, leave some hairs untouched, to grow like the crest of a helmet, from the forehead to the crown. As the savages have neither razors nor scissars, they use a shell sharpened against a stone, or the jaws of the fish palometa, for the purpose of shaving. Most of the Abipones in our colonies let their hair grow long, and twist it into a rope like European soldiers. The same fashion was adopted by the women, but with this difference, that they tie the braid of hair with a little piece of white cotton, as our countrymen do with black. At church, and in mournings for the dead, they scatter their hair about their shoulders. The Guarany Indians, on the contrary, whilst they live in the woods, without the knowledge of religion, let their hair hang down their backs: now that they have embraced Christianity, and entered various colonies, they crop it like priests. But the women of the Guarany towns wear their hair long, platted, and bound with a

M [302]

M [413]

M. [237]

A [765]

Gu 302

GU [177]

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A 302 852 [171] been derived from the Peruvian Indians, who used to cut their children's first hair, at two years of age, with a sharp stone for want of a knife. The ceremony was performed by the A [553] relations, one after another, according to the degrees of consanguinity; and at the same time a name was given to the infant.

A 589 ●765 It is also a custom, amongst the Abipones, to shave the heads of widows, not without much lamentation on the part of the women, and drinking on that of the men; and to cover them with a grey and black hood, made of the threads of the caraquatà, which it is reckoned a crime for her to take off till she marries again. A widower has his hair cropped with many ceremonies, and his head covered with a little net-shaped hat, which is not taken off till the hair grows again. All the men cut off their hair to mourn for the death of a Cacique. Amongst Gu [68] the Christian Guaranies, it is thought a most shameful and ignominious punishment, when any disreputable woman has her hair cut off. I have described the person which liberal nature has bestowed upon the Abipones; it now remains for me to show by what means they disfigure it.

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riers, but after having well rubbed and softened them with their hands, they sew them with a very thin thread, with so much skill, that the seams escape the quickest eye, and the whole cloak looks like one skin. For needles they use very *small thorns*, with which they pierce the otters' skins, as shoemakers do leather with an awl, so that the slender thread of the caraquatà can be passed through it. This cloak is commonly used both by men and women, when the air is cold; but the old people of both sexes will not part with a hair of these otters' skins, even in the hottest weather. Some of the poorer sort appear clothed in the skins of stags, does, and tigers. All the Americans, who are not entirely devoid of modesty, cover themselves with skins to keep out the cold. Others substitute, or wear in addition, the many coloured feathers of birds, sewed together with singular art; but this is more for the sake of adorning than of covering the body. The savages who inhabit the mountains, generally make threads of the caraquatà, or of the bark of the tree pinô, with which they weave a kind of cloth to serve in part for a covering. The Abiponian widows, whilst they mourn for their husbands, cover their shorn heads and their shoulders with this same kind of cloth. When

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Widows also have their hair shaved and wear a kind of cloak made of the caraguata

stained black and red, which covers the head like a hood, and flows down from the shoulders to the breast. Widows use this cloak all their lives, unless a new marriage frees them from the unpleasant law of perpetual mourning. An Abiponian husband when he loses his wife shaves his hair in like manner, and wears a small woollen cap, which he publicly receives from the hands of an old woman, the priestess of the ceremonies, whilst the other women are engaged in lamenting, and the men in drinking together, and which he throws off when his hair begins to grow.

But let me now discourse upon what entirely consoles the Abipones for the loss of their friends, and renders the very necessity of mourning so pleasant to them. Leaving the care of inhuming the body and lamenting for it to the women, they seek for honey in the woods to serve as materials for the public drinking-party, to which they all flock at sun-set. At any report of the death of an Abipon we always pitied the women, upon whom devolved all the trouble of the exequies, the care of the funeral, and the labour of making the grave, and of mourning. For besides that the corpse was to be carried to the grave, and inhumed by them, all standing in a row, and uttering repeated lamentations, the widowers were to be shaved, the widows veiled,

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462 765 the names of the relations of the deceased to be changed, the funeral drinking-party to be attended, and the houses to be demolished; in short, they had to go through the trouble of a public mourning of nine days' continuance. This is of two kinds. One which is held by day in the streets by all but the unmarried women, and another carried on at night in houses appointed for the purpose, and which none but those that are specially invited attend. At stated hours, both in the forenoon and afternoon, all the women in the town assemble in the market-place, with their hair scattered about their shoulders, their breast and back naked, and a skin hanging from their loins. The expression of their faces inspires I can hardly tell whether most of melancholy or terror. Picture to yourself a set of Bacchanals or infernal furies, and you will have a good idea of them. They do not lament in one place by day. They go up and down the whole market-place, like supplicants, walking separately but all in one very long row. You may sometimes [481] count as many as two hundred. They go leaping like frogs. The motion of their feet is accompanied by a continual tossing about of their arms. Each strikes a gourd containing various [534] seeds to the measure of her voice; but some, instead of a gourd, beat a pan covered with

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does' skins, which makes the most ridiculous noise you can conceive. To every three or four gourds one of these drums answers. But what offends the ear most is the shouting of the mourners. They modulate their voices, like singers, and make trills and quavers mingled with groans. After chaunting some mournful staves in this manner they all cease at intervals, and, changing their voices from the highest to the lowest key, suddenly utter a very shrill hissing. You would swear that a knife had been laid to their throats. By this sudden howl they signify that they are seized with rage, uttering all sorts of imprecations on the author of the death, whoever he be. Sometimes, intermitting this chaunt, they recite a few verses in a declamatory tone, in which they extol the good qualities and deeds of the deceased, and in a querulous voice endeavour to excite the compassion and vengeance of the survivors. At other times they mingle tears with their wailings, tears extorted not by grief, but by habit, or, perhaps, by exhaustion. Most of them carry about some little gift or remembrance of the deceased, as emu feathers, glass-beads, a knife, or a dagger. I will now describe their method of lamenting by night.

About evening, all the women that are invited

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462 765 assemble in a hut, one of the female jugglers presiding over the party, and regulating the chaunting and other rites. It is her business to strike two large drums alternately, and to sing the doleful funeral song, the rest observing the same measure of voice. This infernal elegy, accompanied with the rattling of gourds and bellowing of drums, lasts till morning. The same method is observed for eight days without variation; on the ninth night, if they be mourning for a woman, the pans are broken, not without proper ceremonies. The tragic howl, which they uttered on the preceding nights, now gives place to a more festive chaunt, which the old female drummeress interrupts at intervals with out-stretched jaws and a deep, and, as it were, threatening voice, seemingly to exhort her singing companions to hilarity and louder notes. These nocturnal lamentations, which continue nine days, are commenced at the setting and concluded at the rising of the [513] sun. The patience displayed by the women in enduring so many sleepless nights is truly astonishing, but still more so is that of the men who can sleep soundly whilst the air is filled with confused shouts, and the noise of gourds and drums. Nor are funeral rites alone conducted 000 in this manner. The sacred anniversaries to

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THE SACRED ANNIVERSARIES TO
the memory of their ancestors are religiously 462
celebrated with the same rites and ceremonies. 769
Should the memory of her dead mother enter a woman's mind, she immediately loosens her hair, seizes a gourd, paces up and down the street with some women whom she calls to partake in her mourning, and fills the air with lamentation. Few nights pass that you do not hear women mourning. This they do upon their feet, with their bodies turned towards the spot where the deceased is buried, always accompanying their lamentations with the sound of gourds. Women find weeping easier than [181
silence, and this is the reason why the nights 152]
are so seldom passed in quietness. The vociferation, however, always grows more violent as the day approaches; for when one begins to lament another follows her example, then a third comes, and then a fourth, till, by daybreak, the number of mourners seems greater than that of sleepers. The men meantime are by no means idle. The grief which the women 628
express with tears and shrieks, they testify by 721
shedding the blood of enemies or their own. 765
The nearest of kin to the deceased immediately assembles all the fellow-soldiers he can raise, and leads them against the foreign foes by whose hands his relation perished. It is

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628 his business to make the first attack against
721 the author of the death, and not to return
965 home till he has fully revenged it; though these savage heroes sometimes make an inglorious retreat, without obtaining vengeance on their enemies.

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kalipì; at which the auditors burst forth into an exclamation of *Ndŕe*, by which they express a strange and unheard-of thing. Having minutely recounted every circumstance tending to set forth this arduous fight and splendid victory, he proceeds to discover those of his fellow-soldiers that have been wounded in the battle. At every name the by-standers groan, and utter the word *Tayretà!* Poor little thing! As the Abipones think it a crime to utter the name of a dead person, the narrator makes use of a paraphrase, thus, *Yoalè eknam oanerma Hamelèn laneuek là chit kaekà:* The man, the husband of the woman Hamelèn, is now no more. The mention of the death of one of their countrymen entirely destroys all the pleasure which the news of the victory had excited; so that the announcer immediately finds himself deserted by his late attentive listeners, as soon as ever he begins to touch upon this melancholy subject. All the women unloose their hair, snatch up gourds and drums, and lament in the manner that I have described in the twenty-fourth chapter.

The Abipones, when returned from an expedition, enter their horde, not in one company, but separately, without ostentation, if victorious, and without signification of sorrow, if conquered, or even if desperately wounded, un-